MUTINY

A PAPER OF ANARCHISTIC IDEAS & ACTIONS

ISSUE 61 AUGUST/OCTOBER

In The Zine This Issue:

Rioting in London

Stop Coal Seam Gas!

Disaster Communism & Anarchy in the Streets

Greek Rebel Dog Speaks!

police at Jura

Review of The Wolves at the Door

FREE

Editorial

Long-time readers of the zine will know that Mutiny has had a thing for cats. This issue, we give dogs some much needed time in the revolutionary sun. We publish an interview with Loukanikos, a rebellious dog from Greece who has appeared at nearly every protest in Athens over the last few years.

This issue is jam-packed with other interesting content. One of Mutiny's overseas correspondents gives us some analysis of the recent rioting in the UK. Nick Southall writes about 'disaster communism' with a focus on the community response to the Queensland floods at the beginning of 2011. Michelle Collis gives us an update about campaigning against Coal Seam Gas in the Illawarra.

In the last few issues we have interviewed members of collectives that also put out radical publications in Australia. While we hope for this series to continue, this time we instead publish a lengthy review (by two Mutiny editors) of the new journal The Wolves at the Door. We hope this encourages critical thinking about how to make radical publishing as effective as possible. We publish two pieces that discuss how activists should relate to police surveillance, in the light of a strange recent incident in which a cop openly attempted to join Sydney's Jura Books collective, a group that runs an anarchist bookshop in Petersham. Another article stresses the importance of a collective response when activists/revolutionaries have to deal with court cases. Finally, we have put out a call for regular updates from radical collectives in the region, in order to highlight organising that is happening and link up activists involved in different projects. This issue we publish a report from the Melbourne Anarchist Club about their recent activity, and we hope that other collectives send us reports for future issues!

Love and solidarity,

Mutiny Zine Collective

Editors: L-Dog, Syzygy, Blackbeard

Mutiny is an Anarchist collective based in Sydney.
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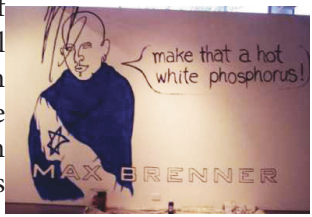
Brief News

Victoria



On the 9th of August several pro-Palestinian activists were arrested in dawn raids in Victoria, for breaching bail conditions imposed following arrests at a protest on 1st July. This protest targeted Max Brenner, a chain store with strong ties to the Israeli military. Police demanded $18,000 as surety for the release of the four activists. 19 people were arrested on the day and face court on 5th September, facing charges of trespass, besetting and acting in a riotous manner. The protests are part of the worldwide Boycott Divestment and Sanctions campaign, which aims to draw attention to the ongoing genocide committed by the Apartheid regime in Israel against Palestinians. For more information see http://boycottisrael19.wordpress.com

California, USA

On July 20th the hunger strike of prisoners at Pelican Bay and other Californian prisons ended as authorities threatened to issue force feeding orders. The strike, which spread to 13 prisons and had over 6,600 individuals participating, led to some immediate changes in policy such as the opportunity for some educational programmes, the provision of all-weather caps (beanies) and wall calenders. Authorities also agreed to investigate changes to other policies. Hunger strikers are giving 2-3 weeks from July 20th to come up with substantive changes in response to their 5 core demands, and may go back on hunger strike if authorities do not follow through. For more info see http:/prisonerhungerstrikesolidarity.wordpress.com

Bulgaria

Jock Palfreeman is a young Australian currently serving a 20-year prison term for murder in Sofia, Bulgaria. Arrested on 28 December 2007 and convicted in December 2009, Jock maintains his innocence. Jock and a couple of friends were in Sofia enjoying a night out when Jock witnessed an attack on a young Roma man by a group of skinheads. Jock rushed to help the victim and was then surrounded and attacked by the group members with concrete tiles. In the subsequent melee, two of the group were wounded, one fatally. More information on the case is available at freejock.com

The last opportunity for appeal in Bulgaria was heard at the Court of Cassation on May 16 2011 and despite the abundant and obvious evidence supporting his case the Bulgarian Injustice system has decided to uphold Jock's sentence. The Palfreeman family's legal advisor Julian McMahon has said that Jock could have a chance if he appeals to the European Court of Human Rights.

If you want to write letters of support to Jock, you can get in touch with us at mutineers@graffiti.net or Jock's family at freejock@live.com.au

Collective Report

Melbourne Anarchist Club

It is with pleasure that the Melbourne Anarchist Club (MAC) responds to the invitation of the Mutiny Collective to report about what's happening at MAC. It is of note that this resulted from the coming together of anarchists from across South-Eastern Australia at the recent Melbourne Anarchist Book Fair. This event was an important example of the continuing vivacity of anarchism here, as well as a level of attraction to it.

At MAC, there has also been a continuing effort to help anarchism live and grow in our city. First, this year MAC has held events like a 140th Anniversary of the Paris Commune gig, where MAC's new publication Black Light was launched, also including bands and an interactive theatre piece; a 75th Spanish Revolution party; a very popular talk by Steve Ignorant (Crass); and a post-Anarchist Book Fair BBQ, where anarchists from around Australia had a chance to meet and talk about our common struggle. Next, as well as regular readings/discussion of anarchist themes at the 'Fantin Reading Group', there is ongoing ardent lively discussion of anarchist theory and practice within MAC, ranging from better anarchist organisation and propaganda to principles of Federation, to move us to ever more useful action for anarchism.

In addition to this work, we have been improving the physical space, which is the MAC building – an island within our oppressive world where free and equal relations can become the norms of life, and authentic struggle for anarchist social revolution the raison d'être. This has meant basic things like painting walls, putting in more bookshelves, and organising our reference/borrowing library and resources (from audio-visual equipment to tea and coffee facilities). More importantly, MAC members have given their scarce time for regular MAC drop-ins, where people can come in and discuss, look at books and generally experience a little piece of what were working towards in a future free society.

For more information on MAC, visit our website at **http://mac.anarchobase.com/** or email us at **melbourneanarchistclub@gmail.com**
Alternatively, go postal at:
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PO Box 494
Brunswick, Vic 3056
Australia

Some thoughts on the riots across the UK

But why are people rioting?

> "That's what it's all about – showing the police we can do what we want. And now we have. […] We're just showing the rich people we can do what we want."
>
> *- Young women interviewed by the BBC in London*

I don't claim to understand the motivations of anyone else who took to the streets. I don't want to claim as my own the anger of people whose lives are different from mine and whose positions are much harder. But, speaking only for myself, it's no mystery that people chose to riot: that people took the opportunity to be, with others, for some hours, out of control.

The greater mystery is that people find it such a puzzle. That even people who spend their lives talking of their opposition to this system have been spending these weeks trying to explain to each other what went wrong to permit such a surge of unrest. It's a shock to find 'anarchists' speaking of the angry crowd as an other to be studied and interpreted. It's as if, because those rioters who do speak don't use the language of demands and negotiation, that they don't make words.

> "Police patrol these streets every night of the week and we only get to riot every few years. They can't come here laying down the law like they do all year round. People are rioting because the riot is finally here."
>
> *- Man in Liverpool interviewed by the Guardian.*

That is not to say that it's not worth talking about what makes life miserable. It's worth talking about policing and about poverty and their increasing interconnectedness. As austerity measures cut away any illusion of a social safety net, or of social mobility, more and more people are pushed to the edge to be controlled and policed as subjects. Look at the response to the riots, where whole families are being threatened with eviction from their council houses because a child has been charged (not even convicted) of riot. This is collective punishment, a colonial strategy.

But this tangle of reasons is the whole of society: we can't blame a segment in the hope of advancing a narrow political agenda. It makes no sense to call for more youth centres, or even for less racist policing as if such a change is possible or would prevent future unrest. We should have no interest in trying to work out which small changes in management technique could calm the suddenly visible anger.

On looting and destruction

The riots were massive and diverse. To celebrate such widespread rebellion is not to say that the riots were not also ugly, terrifying and brutal. It is important to contradict the media narrative that only talks about the worst aspects: that people were killed and burnt out of their homes. This does not mean ignoring such things or hardening ourselves against the 'inevitable' brutality that is already part of social breakdown. However, the fact remains that much of the destruction was well targeted: against police (five police stations attacked in Nottingham and countless smaller attacks everywhere),

banks, courts, bailiffs' offices, pawn brokers, chain stores and luxury stores. In Bristol the offices of the local newspaper, which had printed photos of people police were seeking to identify from these riots and earlier riots in April, was attacked.

There are some who seek to dismiss much of this because it was looting. They condemn not just damage to small stores, which hurt people who were far from rich, but looting per se. They argue it is mere consumerism, selfish theft. They suggest that an action is only 'political', or worth consideration, if you gain nothing from it but a feeling of self-satisfaction. To demand a better standard of life is acceptable: to take things to improve your life is 'mere' criminality. As one commentator put it:

> "buried beneath the attack on the 'crass materialism' of the looting is a nastier worm, that of distance and sheen, that supports critique and dissent precisely to the degree it remains irrelevant and immaterial, that it is to be seen and heard and not ever felt."
> *-http://socialismandorbarbarism.blogspot.com/2011/08/open-letter-to-those-who-condemn_10.html*

Looting is about more than what you gain: it's about the act of taking en masse. When we take to the streets together the barriers that keep us from the things we need or want are literally shattered: everything is free.

However, while some critiques of looting were about protecting property for property's sake, other critiques made on the street were a matter of collective self defence that didn't rely on the state. Shopkeepers in Dalston came out together to protect their small shops but watched the Argos down the road get looted. This is a far cry from those who came out in Hackney the next day with brooms in the air as if the basic work of getting glass off the streets was a photo opportunity or a celebration.

No conclusion

So what happens next? Of course, repression. The prisons are fuller than they've ever been, with hundreds of people being remanded or sentenced for riot related offences. It could well be that the strategy of repression, far from bringing calm, pushes things further – not least inside the prisons themselves. It could also be that fear of having your house burnt down leads to stronger support for police from many. As I write, police are preparing to send ten thousand officers onto the streets of London for Notting Hill carnival weekend. Two days ago a police car in London was firebombed. Things aren't over.

-anon.

By Michelle Collis

The campaign against coal seam gas mining has been active both in Sydney, and in the Illawarra. Gas company Dart Energy hold an exploration licence to drill for gas across Sydney and have targeted a site in St Peters, behind Sydney Park, only 200m from residents and 5km from the CBD. The St Peters well would be the first in an urban area in Australia.

The Stop Coal Seam Gas Illawarra campaign has been active in highlighting community concerns about the environmental and health risks of Coal Seam Gas (CSG). The risks of CSG are that it always involves using contaminated water. The extraction of gas that is drawn out of the coal seam is highly saline and can contain toxic and radioactive compounds, endocrine disrupters and heavy metals. When hydraulic fracturing (or fracking) is used this contaminates large quantities of fresh water with the sand and chemicals that are pumped underground. It lowers the fresh water table and is a fire hazard, as wells, processing and pipelines leak. There are a range of direct and indirect health impacts resulting from this such as heart, lung, kidney and neurological problems and cancer. Over a twenty year period, CSG has a global warming impact that it is as bad if not worse than coal.

This issue has been highlighted in the Illawarra region through the circulation of a petition. Campaigners have been busy gathering signatures and talking about the health and environmental concerns with the general public. The local website http://stop-csg-illawarra.org/ has made the petition available to be downloaded. Each Friday at the Wollongong Produce and Creative Traders Markets in the local mall there has been a Stop CSG stall. The stall has been raising awareness by selling T-shirts and signs for people to place on display at their homes and asking the community to sign the petition. Volunteer data collectors have been counting the number of signatures gained. The goal to obtain 10,000 signatures has nearly been reached so it can then be tabled in Parliament. The petition is advocating a moratorium on all Coal Seam Gas mining, a royal commission into all aspects of CSG mining and a total ban on fracking. To date the original 3 month moratorium on all new – but not existing – fracking projects has been extended to the 31st December, 2011.

On 1st July there was a fundraiser gig held at the Heritage Hotel, in Bulli. This event was a huge success and the place was filled with enthusiastic people bringing a sense of fun and positivity. Community spirit was evident as local bands and performers provided entertainment throughout the night. There was local art on display which could be purchased. Money was raised to continue to fund the

campaign. The event was an example of how to link creativity, music and arts in order to promote a worthwhile cause.

A community forum was held at Thirroul Community Centre on 21 August. The forum was called "Why did over 3000 join together at Austinmere Beach in May?" referring to a human sign that was organised on the beach in that month. A heated discussion was held between a panel of experts and concerned community members. Over 200 people attended the event. The panel of experts included Tom Fontaine, the Managing Director of Ormil Energy, one of the CSG mining companies with approval to drill locally, Alan Lindsay, a chemical engineer who has held senior executive positions with the oil industry in Australia and overseas, and the coal industry in the Hunter Valley, Kirsty Ruddock, principal solicitor within the NSW Environmental Defenders office and Dr Helen Redmond from Doctors for the Environment Australia.

Fontaine said that the campaign was unfounded and fostered fear amongst the community. He said that some of the main organisers were doing this only to promote their own political causes. He reiterated that there would be no fracking in the local area, as the area had been mined heavily already and there would be no need for it. However, when asked if he would enter into an agreement with the community and guarantee that fracking would not occur in the future he said that he would not do this. Later he stated 'I am not anti-fracking. It can be done safely'. Other panel members provided evidence contrary to this outlining the many health and environmental risks that were caused by fracking. It was also highlighted that there were clear risks to the environment even if fracking is not used. The event was covered on local WIN TV news, ABC news and radio and a story was placed in the local paper.

The band Dead Letter Circus came to the Wollongong Unibar at the University of Wollongong on 20th August as part of their 'No fracking way tour'. As part of the tour the band requested that Stop Coal Seam Gas stalls be set up at their gigs. The lead singer of the band addressed the crowd saying that people should use their own minds to analyse current issues and not necessarily believe what is portrayed in the media. He explained the significance of CSG mining. People at the event were keen to sign the petition throughout the night and a lot of people indicated that they had not been aware of the impacts of the industry before this. This was a demonstration of what bands with political conscience can achieve.

The Stop Coal Seam Gas Illawarra continues to apply a theme of how to successfully unite creativity with political organising. Overall, this has been met with positive enthusiasm by people in the Illawarra and has fostered a sense of community spirit. It helps demonstrate what the power of people can achieve and has been a key element in keeping the issue in the mainstream media . For more information or to find out more about how to get involved please call Jess Moore 0416 232 349, Chris Williams 0425 329 963 or John Spira 0438 538 393 [Eds- or see website stop-csg-illawarra.org. To get in touch with STOP CSG Sydney see nogasmininginsydney.com, email info@nogasmininginsydney.com or phone Moira (0420 504 411)].

Disaster Communism and Anarchy in the Streets

- by Nick Southall

In January I sat in front of my TV spellbound by the floods that swept through Queensland. For those of us who have been campaigning for years around environmental issues and climate change the floods weren't a huge shock. However the feelings of helplessness in the face of such astounding power can rapidly flow into the sort of defeatism experienced by those who believe that it's too late to make a difference in the face of widespread environmental destruction. My initial reaction to the flooding was to contact family and friends, isolated in rural Queensland and evacuated in the face of the rising waters in Brisbane, offering what support I could. The floods starkly posed the questions – What should we, or could we, do in the face of such power? Yet no sooner had these questions been posed than a multitude of answers were immediately provided by those who individually and collectively confronted the disaster, working alone and together to protect homes, salvage communities, minimise injury and save lives.

During the days that followed I was reminded of Naomi Klein's *The Shock Doctrine*. Klein's book details how neo-liberalism takes advantage of people's disorientation following massive collective shocks – wars, terrorist attacks and natural disasters – to push through unpopular economic measures often called 'shock therapy'. In *The Shock Doctrine* Klein does a good job of exposing what she calls disaster capitalism'. Most of the book is an unremitting horror story, a powerful and grim exposition of the viciousness of contemporary capitalism. There is little else in the book apart from violence, torture, terror, surrender and defeat. The problem with this concentration on, and emphasis of, the power of capital and capitalist state forms, is that it ends up reinforcing the shocks of disaster capitalism. What would have made this book more useful to those struggling for a better world was more attention to the growing alternatives to the 'shock doctrine'. It is not until the very end of the book that Klein acknowledges those who "are learning how to build shock absorbers into their organising models" through the development of "democracy in daily life". Here she explains that the experience of living through a disaster "is the feeling of being completely powerless: in the face of awesome forces, parents lose the ability to save their children, spouses are separated, homes, places of protection,

become death traps". However what she and many others dealing with disasters have learned is that the best way to recover from helplessness is helping, being part of a communal recovery.

Even before the Queensland floods arrived in many areas people had already formed human chains, organised defence groups to protect homes from the rising water, turned neighbourhood centres into bases for local organising and set up resident action groups to address the needs of those affected. Then there were those who risked and lost their lives. Most of the daring rescues were carried out by ordinary people. And no formal duty made emergency service workers throw themselves into harm's way. All of these heroes risked their lives and gave of themselves, not for glory, a pay packet or a promotion, but because of their humanity. And nothing requires that people help out afterwards. Those, like me, watching on TV, went from being shocked by the floods devastation to being awestruck by people's response. In the waters wake came a great surge of common feeling and collective action from tens of thousands of eager volunteers. Prime Minister Julia Gillard exclaimed that "The scale of the volunteering is taking people's breath away . . . literally everyone is trying to find someone to help, selflessly going and helping a neighbour". Flood survivor Christina Avolio told the media there was "so much kindness it makes you want to cry".

Queensland Premier Anna Bligh quickly attempted to have the government organise, and claim as 'Operation Compassion', those who turned up to clean out inundated homes and streets. However the Brisbane City Council, which organised the cities 'official' volunteer force, had to turn away thousands of people every day for whom it simply didn't have any transport. Most of them, took it upon themselves to get to wherever they could be most useful. In fact, they had a better chance of getting more done this way. The government's attempts to coordinate the stream of volunteers was severely hampered by the time and energy wasted on red tape and bureaucratic stupidity. Although there were hundreds of 'official' volunteers in many areas scraping and digging away at the toxic sludge that blanketed the area, there were thousands more who arrived of their own volition carrying flat headed shovels, rakes, brooms, cartons of drinking water, disinfectant, food supplies, whatever they thought might be needed. Amongst them were people from all walks of life, young and old, multicultural and from many parts of the world. As hundreds more poured in from interstate, it was fascinating to see how such a multitude cooperated. As one observer noted; "All up and down the long road broom pushers realised they could sweep a small tide of mud away from the houses and back towards the river if they locked their broom heads together and pushed all at once. Somebody had come up with the idea of fashioning a giant squeegee from the doors of ruined cupboards sitting in the trash piles by the side of the road. There were no foreman or gang bosses to coordinate the efforts of this volunteer force, and yet it organised itself".

Soon those who couldn't get to Queensland, or to the affected areas, were making donations of money, food, clothing, toys, furniture and transport, collecting goods and fundraising.

Hundreds of millions in cash, supplies and equipment was quickly donated by people from around the globe. Evacuation centres across Queensland were overwhelmed with offers of help. A group of people who had lost their homes in Kinglake Victoria, during the 'Black Saturday' bushfires drove up with supplies and joined the recovery effort. Refugees in detention centres donated money. Individuals and groups, from local cricket clubs to rock bands, organised sausage sizzles, concerts and cake stalls, taking it upon themselves to redistribute wealth to those in need.

The flood crisis unleashed on a massive scale something that occurs every day yet is often neglected, ignored or denied; people offering others a helping hand. These actions make a lie out of the idea that people are selfish, self-absorbed and apathetic, that there is no alternative to individualistic cravings for commodities or a brutal 'dog eat dog' world. Tens of thousands of people showed that we don't need capital or governments to get things done. They demonstrated the will of people to take part in comforting each other, re-building, creating and moulding their own futures. In *The Shock Doctrine Klein* uses the term "direct action reconstruction" to describe the efforts of communities hit by disaster that do not wait for the state, or allow capital to take the initiative but instead 'negotiate with their hands', rebuilding their own communities and 'healing themselves', resulting in communities that are stronger. I call these efforts disaster communism, others call it anarchy.

'THE FLOOD CRISIS UNLEASHED ON A MASSIVE SCALE SOMETHING THAT OCCURS EVERY DAY...'

In her recent book, *A Paradise Built in Hell: The Extraordinary Communities That Arise in Disaster,* Rebecca Solnit explains what people tend to do for themselves in disasters. Her book is an investigation of the moments of altruism, resourcefulness, and generosity that arise amid disaster's grief and disruption and considers their implications for everyday life. What Solnit highlights is not merely that so many people rise to the occasion, but that they do so with joy and love, revealing a widespread yearning for community, purposefulness, and meaningful work. As well, she details how the negative impacts of disasters are often deepened by those in power, through fear or panic, and how often and quickly the authorities resort to extreme and violent measures. The heroism of ordinary people is part of Solnit's study. But she also questions the widespread tendency to assume that people will not act in heroic and altruistic ways and how 'official' responses come out of this belief. Solnit examines the dominant narrative governing business and state reactions to specific case studies including the London blitz, the Mexico City earthquake of 1985 and Hurricane Katrina and its aftermath in New Orleans. In these cities wracked by disaster much of the response by authorities was based on beliefs that their primary job was to protect private property from rampaging mobs and suppress the panicked populace. As Solnit uncovers, these visions of post-disaster policing are at best a misinterpretation of the reality on the ground. "The standard assumption among government planners, Hollywood filmmakers and wealthy people is that disasters result in anarchy, crime and

panic in the streets". We are all familiar with the dominant themes of apocalyptic scenarios; terrified crowds trampling each other to escape, the rapid breakdown of social order, people looting, hoarding and defending their turf as they viciously fight each other for limited resources. These scenarios are based on depressing, demoralising and fear inducing views of 'human nature' promoted by the mainstream media, governments and law enforcement agencies, which are often used to justify authoritarian and violent repression. Solnit argues that pessimistic views of how people respond to disasters are fundamentally wrong. Instead, she examines how disasters are far more likely to bring out the best in people. "Disasters are extraordinarily generative," she writes, as capitalism collapses: "In its place appears a reversion to improvised, collaborative, cooperative and local society".

'[PEOPLE] REACHED OUT TO EACH OTHER, TOOK DIRECT ACTION, RE-CONFIGURED SPACES AND RELATIONSHIPS...'

When creeks and rivers burst their banks they powerfully defy the borders of an unnatural order. The structures of 'normal' life are ruptured; many facades of capitalist society topple and are swept away, exposing both hidden vulnerabilities and potentials, transforming people, their relationships and communities. It is often during such events that we feel most alive, most human, the most connected to our family, neighbours, friends and community, the rest of humanity and the planet. Anything could happen. Things that seemed impossible a day or two before suddenly seem irresistible and we discover new ways of doing things. Of course certain things are no longer possible, the power maybe out, the roads closed; we aren't able to do what we usually do. But other things seem, and are, more possible. For many there is no need to go to work, school or university. In some respects there is more freedom for people to act as they wish – freedom to connect, to engage in communal activity, to use their imagination, to make things different or differently, to figure out for themselves what to do, how to do it and then organise to get it done. And what did most people do with this liberty during the flood crisis? They reached out to each other, took direct action, re-configured spaces and relationships, got to know each other and developed more democratic, caring and egalitarian social processes. These alternative communities arise at times of turmoil. They demonstrate the capacity of people to stop doing what they usually do, to transform private space, private time and private property into community space, community time and community property, to self-organise production, distribution and exchange.

Disasters prise open the apparent limits of the possible into which can rush potentials for progressive new developments and anti-capitalist experiments. Although people continue to use old methods and mechanisms, they also create new, more valuable and useful ways of getting things done. The horizontal network forms of organising that replace the usual state forms are shown not just to be more inclusive and democratic, but more efficient and more productive. The lived experience of alternative society

transforms norms, values and beliefs, from those of self-interest into those of human interest. Skills or attributes that are often under-valued; healing, caring, flexibility, self-sufficiency, counselling, local knowledge and community connections are suddenly understood as crucial. As people come closer to each other they are better able to share resources, knowledges, ways of doing and experiences, enriching lives and communities, opening up new horizons for creativity, and further deepening interactions.

In *A Paradise Built in Hell* Solnit details how people who went through the San Francisco earthquake or the immediate aftermath of 9/11 in Manhattan report that it was a "peak experience" of human connection and shared purpose. She uses the work of sociologist and disaster expert Charles Fritz who wrote: "Disasters provide a temporary liberation from the worries, inhibitions and anxieties associated with the past and future because they force people to concentrate their full attention on immediate moment-to-moment, day-to-day needs within the context of present realities. Disaster provides a form of societal shock which disrupts habitual, institutionalised patterns of behaviour and renders people amenable to social and personal change". In disasters, writes Solnit, "the hierarchies, administrations and institutions, the social structures, tend to fall apart, but what result tends to be anarchy in [the] sense of people coming together in freely chosen cooperation rather than the media's sense of disorderly savagery". The experience of "freely chosen cooperation" in disasters allows people to see the rigid, inept, self-serving, authoritarian nature of 'rulers', and encourages them to entertain the communal as an appealing alternative. The rise of communism is precisely what is so threatening to elites, which is why they often react to disasters with military/police power. Solnit calls it "elite panic", the deep fears among elites that the commoners will go wild and destroy private property, challenge the government and the status quo. As Solnit explains, this fear is not unfounded as people "themselves in these moments constitute the government, the acting decision-making body, as democracy has always promised and rarely delivered. Thus disasters often unfold as though a revolution has already taken place".

The reason that this type of government, this democracy, can occur during these critical times is because revolution has already taken place, and is already taking place. The new forms of government, 'spontaneous communities' and 'commons' that arise in disasters are in fact constructed from pre-existing support networks, organisational forms and alternative economies. As one reviewer of Solnit's book explains; "The power of disasters . . . may be in their power to give us a real-life glimpse of the "utopias" that exist within us and our communities every day, but which are papered-over by the accumulated patterns of culture and politics. Disasters disclose another reality. We can actually matter. We can actually work together with strangers of different backgrounds. We can actually play heroic roles and improvise effective solutions. We can actually experience membership in a beloved community . . . people can begin to experience their own personal agency and collective power".

Disasters like those in Queensland, Christchurch and Japan pose questions

about what has personal value and social worth? What is really precious? While accountants, bankers and technocrats try to calculate the cost of disasters in money terms, the impact on the economy or GDP, many people cease to care about their possessions and open their wallets, their homes and their hearts. Over and over you hear survivors and rescuers exclaiming that possessions are not important; life is important, we are important, our relationships and communities are important. This understanding challenges the capitalist concentration on consumption, commodification and exchange value as common social realities. People in crisis don't just conceive of doing things without money, they do things without money. And they are much more likely to recognise that family, friendship and community networks are incredibly valuable. The Queensland floods, exposed the existing social solidarities, the 'moral' and 'gift' economies of community service, fellowship, self-help and improvement, the sharing of work, money, goods, emotional and psychological support provided by the on-going organisation of non-capitalist exchanges. Today these social relations of production are widespread, ranging from 'gift economies' such as the open source movement, peer-to-peer networks and 'grass roots' activism, to 'moral economies' that include recovered enterprises, cooperatives and fair trade networks. The spread of sharing and barter economies that organise production, distribution and exchange through collaborative labour is today weaving 'networks of economic solidarity' involving millions of people working for common benefit, rather than for profit. Communities and social movements have always relied on such sharing, cooperative and caring relationships and the more visible these practical alternatives become the more people become aware of the actual existence of liberatory communism.

Disasters are horrific. People die; many more are injured, lose their loved ones and their homes. Washing over the devastated areas of Queensland, along with the toxins and shit, were a layer of people acting like human scum, taking advantage of the disaster in order to rise to the top. There are those who profited from the floods; scam artists, much of the media, some politicians, businesses and developers. And if you want more details on how horrific this 'disaster capitalism' can be then I definitely recommend *The Shock Doctrine*. However as the Queensland government rushed to restore coal exports ASAP, and the diggers and the skips removed the flotsam of the past and the muck of the present, we were not only presented

with a new capitalist year zero. Instead this 'biblical flood' reminds us of our continuing attempts at exodus, our flight from the toxins and shit, from the chrome and plastic crap, from alienation, bad jobs and shallow relationships. Looking upon the remnants of their lives the first things that most people choose to save from their past are pets, photos, sentimental items and most importantly, of course, they rescue each other. While some quickly return to 'business as usual', countless others continue to rely on their social networks, the support, generosity and love of others. As the most vulnerable face the devastating impacts of extreme weather, environmental, economic, military and social crisis, we all face the question of how we should confront these frightening challenges. During and after disasters some government intervention is helpful and useful. There are a variety of capitalist state forms, some of which are worse than others. For example, the reaction of the Queensland and Federal Governments to the floods was dramatically different to the Bush administrations reaction to hurricane Katrina. The ability of people to powerfully self-organise themselves helps to shape, transform and limit the impact of state power. The extension of existing communism, democratic, peaceful and loving self-government, is a movement of autonomy, both against and outside capital.

In the wake of disasters things do not just return to 'normal' and we do not just start anew. Instead we rebuild on foundations that have weathered the storm; foundations of solidarity, of friendship, of love, strengthening our relationships and communities, re-imagining work, not for pay or profit, but for each other. Counter-disaster activities produce new relationships, networks, shared experiences, understandings and goals, and these are not just left to float away or simply discarded like rotting debris. The sharing of money, goods, labour, skills, expereiences, knowledge and resources, can construct communal relations, where the reliance on others is capable of sustaining alternative cooperative society. When capitalism and its state forms are weakened, forms of mutual aid, affinity and social collaboration can flourish. In the face of disaster we see more clearly that we cannot rely on capital, governments and bureaucrats, and in response many of us turn to each other for support, building camaraderie and trust. These are the social relations we can rely on when faced with future crises. Although there are dark clouds on the horizon and our lives often seem to hover on the edge of an abyss, environmental and other disasters are not the only rising tides. There are also surging global waves of struggle, rebellion and revolt. As we have recently seen, in places like Tunisia and Egypt, when people take part in revolutionary uprisings they behave in different or unexpected ways. Many people do the same when faced with disasters like those in Queensland, New Zealand and Japan. It is easy to forget that this also happens in a multitude of ways every day. In response to the daily individual and collective disasters of capitalist society, the desire to help others, to make a difference, to aid recovery and healing, to share and care, to make life more wonderful, and to construct a better world together, inspires a vast amount of powerful affective social action. Disaster communism is everyday communism writ large.

REBEL DOG SPEAKS!

Loukanikos (Rebel or Riot Dog) has gained international fame for being present at nearly every protest in Greece in the last few years. You can check out pictures of his exploits at ***http://rebeldog.tumblr.com/****. He has over 72,000 'likes' on Facebook! We interviewed Louk in mid-August 2011. To send solidarity to Louk, you can contact him at revoltingdog@gmail.com. For ongoing updates about the struggles in Greece, see Occupied London -* ***http://www.occupiedlondon.org/blog/****. A number of statements about recent events were reprinted in our previous issue, Mutiny #60, as well.*

Favourite food?

I am mostly a fan of the greek cuisine.
Actually of anything I can eat without a knife and fork.

In English your name translates as "sausage", is there a story behind the name?

Just like Tramp of 'The Lady and the Tramp' movie I have many names. Some people confuse me with Kanellos, a quadruped anarchist legend that passed away in July 2008. Most of the people know me as Loukanikos or Louk which actually means sausage (thank dog I wasn't eating souvlaki that day). And the volunteers that take care of the stray animals of Athens, including me, wrote Theodoros on my collar tag. Theodoros means *Gift of God* and it is also the name of Kolokotronis who was a Leader of the Greek Revolution against the Turks in 1821. Well, to cut a long story short, we dogs don't care as much about names and tags as you people do.

Do you identify as male, female, intersex or gender diverse?

By birth, I'm a male dog and as a sterilized stray I'm quite asexual (it sounds kind of harsh but I can focus more clearly on the cause now). Anyhow, I support the gay rights movement. Homosexuality is a part of nature, homophobia can only be found in some human cultures.

Do you call yourself an anarchist?

I don't like names and tags as I said before. I can say that I have humanistic feelings, that I despise injustice and oppression and that all humans have the right to be stray. The greek word for stray is 'Adespotos' which means without a master, without a despot. So, I prefer the word adespotos.

You are a world wide celebrity now, you have songs written about you & multiple blogs and facebook pages in your honour. How do you deal with the fame?

I don't understand fame, I appreciate the love though. Some people say that fame is putting me in a dangerous position. Partially they are right because I don't like cops and cops don't like me. But I believe there is only one certainty… This life is going to kill you one day, so you better chew it to the bone.

Why do you riot?

Because now is the time to.

Favourite riot moment?

All, because when we protest and react I feel optimistic and alive.

Does tear gas affect you more than the human protesters because of you heightened sense of smell?

No, it's the opposite. This CS teargas stuff cannot affect dogs but it's quite unbearable for cats and humans. Don't know why it works that way.

What is the situation like at the moment as you see it?
Are we really on the cusp of social revolution in Greece & what still needs to be done?

Social revolution is not a Greek symptom. We are all interconnected politically and most of all economically. And we are all on the verge of a new era. The Greek government made deals with the IMF and the European Union that are draining the life out of the poor as well as the middle class. The plan known as a 'bailout' is actually a life buoy filled with cement. How can you survive holding that? Under those conditions acts of resistance are inevitable. The thing is, you can't turn all people into rebels but you can change history when there is social consciousness, when people are thirsty for justice and equality and fed up with all that neoliberal capitalistic mumbo jumbo.

Do you do much in-between protest support like anxiety relief and arrestee solidarity?

All strays are anxiety relief agents in the city because we remind you that we are all part of Nature. I am always there where I'm needed.

Have you ever bitten a cop? what did it taste like?

No, I am more of a theoretical type, but word has it that they don't taste like pigs. It's more like a sweaty green towel with lilly patterns on it.

Do you want to give a shout out to any other riot dogs?

Get off your comfortable pillow bed, the time is now, unless you believe in reincarnation and you are sure you are going to return in life as a human or a stray dog in Athens.

Is there anything else you would like to say to the readers of Mutiny Zine?

Well, there is a lot to say… You should read and think and hear and be open to everything and then maybe you can find out something. Guard your hope and your empathy, fight for what is right and you will make your life worth living. Solidarity to all.

We fought the law and we kinda won...

On Monday, August 15th, 6 comrades were before the courts for the conclusion of a case that had stemmed from their arrest at a protest against a racist mural that had occurred in Newtown (Sydney) in January. All charges that were being contested were dismissed by the magistrate after a two and a half day hearing. The charges faced by the defendants involved some combination of hinder police, assault police and resist arrest – generally standard stuff for the state to throw at protesters, but nonetheless stressful for those involved. The only conviction recorded in this case occurred as one of the 6 plead guilty to a charge of malicious damage.

The dismissal of all contested charges is a fantastic outcome and a relief, but the purpose of this statement beyond reporting that, is to provide a brief overview about what the collective response to these charges looked like and what issues came up. Discussions about how to organise a collective response to the charges occurred fairly quickly after the arrests and included those arrested as well as those wanting to act in solidarity with them. Getting everyone together fairly promptly is a crucial step, before people feel it is necessary to go off and explore their legal options on a purely individual basis. It is important to always talk to comrades before talking to lawyers.

The idea of a collective response to such charges and ongoing solidarity is going to be repeatedly emphasised here because the act of sticking together is a statement of intent and empowerment for revolutionaries before a legal system that seeks to isolate and disempower us. Obviously, active solidarity (as opposed to simple well-wishes) from those not arrested is also crucial in building some sense of empowerment as it signals that protests and actions belong to all of us and do not just end on the day but continue through the legal process of those who happen to be the ones that are nicked.

In this situation organising a collective response quickly meant we could come to some common idea about what our legal strategy might be. It also meant – importantly – that any potential conflicts in individual's cases could be identified and worked around. This is a crucial reason for organising an 'all-in' response to such charges. Beyond the obvious not pointing the finger at anyone else (which no-one would do, right?), there's also the point that in such collective situations it is not politically useful for someone to run a defence along the lines of "yes, what happened was very bad, but I wasn't the one who did it". An admission that any actions on the day were 'wrong' (apart from the cops, obviously) can have a negative impact on others fighting the charges and are otherwise just pretty poor form.

It even turned out to be fairly useful that there was difficulty organising legal representation as it meant those involved came to know the details of the case intimately and didn't come to rely solely on the advice of lawyers. Additionally, being unrepresented and having to speak for themselves during the preliminary court dates allowed the defendants to overcome some of the intimidation factor that the layout of the court space is meant to create. Overall, working collectively from the

get go allowed all involved to share their differing skills, capacity and experience and somewhat spread the workload in terms of the boring, bureaucratic paperwork and chasing up of various contacts that needs to be done in these situations.

Less positively, there was also a 7th person facing charges from this protest. They chose to separate their case from that of their (former?) comrades. Unsurprisingly this person has major upper-class credentials, with a parent that is a partner in a law firm no less. Rather than attempt to take their material advantages and spread them amongst the group, this person (with that parent representing them) argued forcefully in court that they absolutely had to be separated from the others. Maybe they were worried the appealing shine of their class credentials would be dulled amongst the rest of the rabble-rousing mob. Pointing this out is not to be purely (only partly) vengeful or to shame that person. It is necessary because if in a relatively minor case like this a supposed comrade chooses a position of self-interest, it does not bode well for more serious matters. It raises questions of whether we actually have each others backs when the repressive forces of the state come calling.

So where he had a team of lawyers working the case for him, we as a group in solidarity with each other did the same things, all the while trying to not let the isolating tendencies of the legal process dictate our actions. Of course it was stressful, but plenty was learnt. One of the most important lessons was that of needing to organise defence witnesses in the most useful way for the case – a way that isn't necessarily the one suggested in law school manuals or by those with legal qualifications. Something to think about for the future.

There is one last thing to say on this case that most of us probably understand, but is maybe never made explicit. That as revolutionaries involved in ongoing struggle against the state, a positive verdict in the courts should in no way be used as some affirmation or justification for our actions or decisions. Choosing to stand together against the police aggression at the mural protest is not now affirmed because those arrested got off – even if the charges had stuck it was a necessary course of action. Similarly, facing the legal process in as collective a manner as possible and involving comrades beyond just those arrested, is a decision to stick to our collective hope in struggle no matter what the outcome of the case may have been.

Note 1: This report was not written by all, or even most, of those involved in this case (whether arrested or not) and so the points in it cannot be said to represent all their opinions. It really is only a brief overview of some of the things that should be considered in future court cases.

Note 2: The one conviction for malicious damage led to an 18 month good behaviour bond for the accused. In sentencing they made the political decision to not bring any references before the court as they were not interested in proving their 'good character' to any arm of the capitalist state's repressive apparatus.

Note 3: The legal profession is obviously not presented in a good light in the words preceding. It does not follow that everyone with legal qualifications is therefore not with us. There were some people who made it their business to use their knowledge to help with this case. Cheers for that.

- anon.

AUSTRALIAN FEDERAL POLICE AGENT IN SYDNEY

There has recently been some discussion in radical circles in Sydney around the question of how activists should relate to police surveillance. This was sparked by a cop attempting to join the Jura Books collective (Jura is an anarchist bookshop in Petersham - www.jura.org.au). We publish two pieces in relation to this. The first is by some Sydney anarchists who are not members of Jura. The second, by the Jura collective themselves, responds to both the first piece and to the situation in general. After these articles were written we were alerted to Albert's intentions to start the SYDNEY ANARCHIST GROUP meeting at the Crown Hotel in Revesby to "discuss the political and philosophical idea that is Anarchism ".

-Eds

Throughout the last year an agent of the Australian Federal Police (AFP), Albert Osseily has associated with the anarchist, radical left, and activist milieu in Sydney. This information was brought to our attention when he admitted to being a cop via email.

He uses this identity on Facebook, and has posted comments on various websites and forums. Recently he expressed interest in becoming more involved at Jura Books. He claims to be a legitimate anarchist cop, and that he sees this to bear no contradiction.

To emphasize how serious this is it may be necessary to describe the AFP. The AFP is the law enforcement agency that investigates crimes against the nation such as organised crime, terrorism, information technology and communications, transnational and multi jurisdictional crime, and serious major fraud against the government. It is equivalent to the FBI in the United States.

As anarchists, our project of liberation is the natural enemy of the culture of exploitation, alienation, hierarchy, discrimination and subjugation we now live under. Our self managed spaces are our bases of attack against political and economic power, political parties, police, media, union bureaucrats, the state and its apologists. Let's make it clear - snitches, informers, and cops are not welcome in our spaces.

We don't know the true motivation for Albert's surreal confession, but we do know that the police wish to silence us by sowing fear, mistrust, and misinformation in our community, and to gather information to make arrests so they can lock people up. With the growing wave of repression by the state towards direct action oriented struggles it should come as no surprise to find police agents or privately employed informers in our midst.

To develop an effective long-term resistance movement we must develop a reflexive anti-snitch security culture. This text is part of this process by making these developments public, and hopefully helping others to avoid being put in danger by the police.

NO TOLERANCE FOR SNITCHES, INFORMERS, AND COPS

- sydney anarchists

• "POLICE AT JURA" JURA BOOKS COLLECTIVE

Jura Books is open 5 days a week and on any given day, numerous diverse people will visit the bookstore to find out more about anarchism, what's going on in Sydney or to share their own organising projects. In the past few months, a man named Albert has come into the bookstore once or twice, and attended an event at Jura (on the politics of Twitter). Albert appeared genuinely interested in anarchist theory like the ideas of Noam Chomsky, and he was keen to discuss the recent uprising in Egypt and how it related to him personally as a middle-aged working class man of Egyptian heritage.

About a month ago, Albert emailed Jura to inform the collective that he is employed as a police officer with the Australian Federal Police. He seemed aware of how being a police officer and an anarchist may seem mutually exclusive, and how having a police officer within an anarchist space might affect Jura. However he said that he wanted to be honest and open with the Jura collective, and also asked if the collective would accept him becoming more involved with Jura.

This strange and almost surreal situation has prompted much discussion and debate within the Jura collective, and the broader anarchist community within Sydney. The Jura collective agreed that:

- All members of the working class have to do jobs that involve things that they don't agree with. However there is a difference between this contradiction and people that work within the active repressive arm of the state. Politically, we would like to engage with everyone, but practically this simply isn't possible. We can't engage with the police due to the very nature of their employment which includes the surveillance of political and activist groups.
- The Jura collective does not encourage police to visit Jura. If possible we actively discourage it.
- The Jura collective acknowledges that we cannot guarantee that the Jura space is free from police (plain-clothed or in uniform). All users of the space are encouraged to be mindful of this and to avoid discussing matters that may incriminate themselves or others.
- Everyone at the collective meeting that discussed Albert's request agreed that they did not want to engage with Albert, either within or outside of the Jura space. To our knowledge, no-one has discussed anything with him relating to the inner workings of Jura or the anarchist community.
- If a person left an oppressive profession e.g. the police force, the collective may be willing to reconsider engaging with that individual.

Jura wrote to Albert explaining these issues and that the collective had decided that because of his employment with the police, his presence would make members and users of the Jura space too uncomfortable. We politely requested that he does not visit the bookshop, and that we rescinded any implied invitation for him to enter Jura Books. We informed Albert that we would be willing to reconsider engaging with him if he leaves the police force, and sent him links to websites about anarchism.

Albert replied and seemed to accept this decision. However he said that he was upset with the decision, particularly because it seemed like we were making a personal judgment about him without knowing him. He also disagreed with the collective's analysis that all police officers are inevitably involved in the repression of activists and the working class.

Jura has responded by explaining that we identify the distinction between the person and the institution. Our decision was not intended to be a personal judgment of Albert, but we have judged the institution that he works for. We encouraged him to continue to do research about the police and how they have impacted labour struggles, working class and activist movements throughout history.

We informed him that we did not intend to assert that he is not a member of the working class as he'd suggested we'd done, however we do assert that his job is oppressive to workers in the current system.

This situation has raised some important issues and questions about police in activist spaces, broader issues of security culture and policing, and the politicisation of police officers. The Jura collective would like to share some discussions that we've had on these issues:

- Suspected cops have come into Jura many times in the past. This particular cop has 'outed' himself. There are likely to be other cops and informants that we don't know about.
- Having said this we endeavour to foster a useful security culture – a way of communicating, having discussion and organising that is open and accountable, but that also seeks to minimise incrimination and infiltration. We aim to always be vigilant about the state's repressive capabilities, whilst also seeking to avoid being incapacitated by paranoia, fear and internally destructive behaviours. Broadly we aim to develop a culture of solidarity and safety within our communities, to build movements capable of transforming the entire society, free from violence and oppression.
- Radicals are under the particular attention of the state because of our opposition to existing systems of exploitation and oppression. Across the world there are too many historical and current examples of surveillance, infiltration and repression of political groups. However we believe that opposition to policing should be located within a broader analysis of the police, including the daily, systematised policing that affects many other people and communities like Aboriginal and working class neighbourhoods. We think that it is a mistake to focus on "activist-oriented" critiques of the police, as we don't think that this is the most effective way that "activists" can contribute to building broader movements against the state.
- The contradictions of work under capitalism and the complexities surrounding workers' relationship with their jobs certainly requires considered thought and discussion. For example some people in the collective made a comparison between someone being a police officer and someone being a coal miner, and the fact that we would seek to engage with the coal miner, so why not also a police officer? Other people in the collective felt that the comparison wasn't a valid one, as they drew a distinction between undesirable jobs under capitalism, and being employed as an agent of the repressive arm of the state.
- Having identified the distinction between the person and the institution, we think that it is important to be aware about the person. However in this situation we think that it is a mistake to be distracted by focusing on any one person. The real task is to organise.

The Jura collective has dealt with this situation through its internal processes that seek to make decisions via a democratic, collective process, which we believe to be the appropriate way for anarchists to discuss and resolve controversial matters. We have reached agreement on our position, but we recognise that not all anarchists will agree with it. We claim only to represent ourselves, and note that one text that has circulated about this issue claims to represent all anarchists in Sydney, which we don't think is ever appropriate (this is referring to the above piece that is signed 'sydney anarchists' - Eds). We've written this article in order to articulate some of our discussion about these issues, and hope that it is a useful contribution to broader discussions about police in activist spaces, broader issues of security culture and policing, and the politicisation of police officers.

For some excellent resources on security culture (though UK-specific), visit:

http://www.activistsecurity.org/

MINDSETBREAKER PRESS- SUPPORT COMRADES IN THE PHILIPPINES!

If you want to donate to support this project, please contact the collective at mindsetbreakerpress@riseup.net

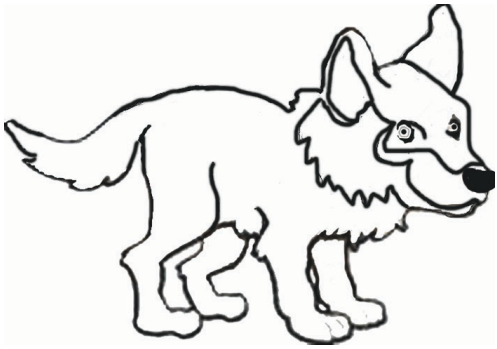
We are an underground anarchist publishing and distribution entity based in the Philippines. We believe that every issue that affects our lives is interconnected; be it social or ecological catastrophes, small scale or large, [related to] society or the individual. It does not come from us but manifests through domineering hierarchical structures and centralized order; maintained by the state and religion, morality; the spectre of capitalism aimed towards greed and profit. This was organised, founded and carried out from the ashes of ruthless terror and bloodshed many centuries [ago] that we blindly inherit today .

We believe in no borders and willfully continue fighting against [them] until [their] destruction: alongside sexism, homophobia, racism and other forms of oppression that was created and needs to be challenged...

Mindsetbreaker Press started in early 2010 as an individual project that focused mainly on translating anarchist literatures (English text) into local languages that will be more applicable and relevant to the rather complex political, social and economic currents of the Philippines. As time passed, the membership of the press grew after personal collaboration with some friends involved in anarchist social networks and activism. However, the project is open to new people who are interested in taking part or extending their support [which would be] beneficial to the project... The press is now run by four people specifically working on publishing and distribution, besides other existing projects. [These include running] social centres or infoshops, making zines and alternative publications, organizing issue-based radical events and shows, protest and demonstrations, leafleting for campaigns, opening free shops and giving out free food on the streets, holding forums, working with communities (farmers, fisher folks and indigenous people) and fighting capitalist and state developments (Mining, Freeport, Agribusiness, etc.). These actions have been carried out independently from state intervention, businesses, the mainstream media, NGO's and religious institutions.

The project is ongoing. Activities range from translation work and literature tabling to community events like local food not bombs, gigs, workshops and discussion groups in various universities. Many of these actions were run by independent people and friends that we have personal connections with, linking up a diversity of ideas and activities in the hope of being embraced by lots of people who are interested in or new to such alternative existence. As an underground press, we are here to openly reach different people and stand our ground in a way that is not only limited to subculture and scenes. And ultimately become a worthwhile initiative that can keep projects running and contribute services to other people, so they can start projects themselves. This might not be limited to ideas but include action and building solidarity.

Yours in trouble,
Mindsetbreaker Press and Distribution



Review: The Wolves at the Door

By Syzygy and L-Dog (two of Mutiny Zine's current editors)

The Wolves at the Door is a new anarchist journal. The first issue, published in Sydney, came out in late June this year. 7 pieces appear in it. These are all thoughtful and well-written, and we thoroughly enjoyed reading them. *Wolves* is one of a number of radical publications to appear recently: others include *Melbourne Black* (which is no longer being published), *Black Light, Black Kite Quarterly, Broad Left* and *Renegade Activists*. To us, this work of putting publications together is a fairly basic and essential part of building successful social movements and, ultimately, revolutionary politics in Australia.

Of course, different publications have different aims. In *Mutiny*, we try to meet a few objectives. We cover news of resistances around the world which might not appear in the mainstream media, and provide an 'anarchistic' or revolutionary perspective on some current events. These parts of the zine might be of interest to both those who identify as revolutionaries and people in 'the general public' (for want of a better word). We also publish articles that are specifically orientated towards people around the radical scene. These are predominantly critical reflections about the organising and politics of both the broader 'left' and the anarchist/ultra-left milieu.

In contrast to *Mutiny*'s eclectic mix of material, *Wolves* has a clear focus on the question of how to change and improve upon revolutionary practice. We think this is a both a strength and a weakness. On the one hand, it reflects a positive desire to critically reflect upon the forms that activism takes and not just organise projects for the sake of doing something. Clearly, the radical left milieus in Australia are in an extremely weak position at the present, with little, if any, influence over society at large. In this situation, a detailed exploration of the strengths and weaknesses of various activist strategies is a logical thing to do, and might help us find a way out of the far left's current impasse.

However, focusing overly on revolutionary practice risks separating this practice from an understanding of the nature of the society that we live in. We thought that *Wolves* could do a better

job at relating practice to these 'material conditions'. Although the articles do engage with stuff happening in the world they generally only analyse things that are within the confines of the far left - they discuss British social centres, refugee protests, anarchist spaces and liberal tendencies within activism. There are two articles on Libya and Greece but neither of these analyse conditions within either country in depth. Instead they function more as emotional appeals to stand in solidarity with people struggling there.

We feel like effective practice stems not just from reflecting on particular organising experiences, as most articles in *Wolves* do, but also from reflecting on the world in general. For instance, some articles in *Mutiny* have examined conditions around welfare in Australia, as well as how international students fit into Australian capitalism. Hopefully, these articles have helped people think about how to organise effectively around these issues by better understanding such conditions. At the least, having a better understanding of what's going on may allow people to make more convincing arguments in support of radical politics and avoid unsubstantiated moralising. In a publication like *Wolves*, with a fairly long word limit, there's plenty of scope to publish articles like these.

Related to this, one point that comes up in *Wolves* (in both the articles 'Cake or Death' and 'Untangling the Knots') is a critique of how people within the anarchist/ultra-left milieu are reluctant to honestly talk to folks in 'the general public' about revolutionary politics. What we have suggested above might help to provide part of the solution to this problem. We'd suggest that part of this reluctance comes not from a lack of revolutionary fervour, but from the types of writing and political conversations/debates that happen within the milieu. There are sophisticated and complex debates about strategies, but we talk and write about more general political issues far less frequently. If *Wolves* were to encourage people to write about these kind of issues it might help activists become more willing to talk about their revolutionary views to others, as they might be able to communicate them more effectively.

Perhaps activists are reluctant to write and talk about this stuff because the socialist sects have really poor articles on current events or 'material conditions' in their publications, with terrible writing and an overwhelming focus on supporting a political line, which obscures the actual issue that they are supposed to be analysing. But it is possible to do this well. The Sydney-based blog *Left Flank,* in particular, has a lot of good articles in this vein. From overseas, one example to learn from might be Richard Seymour's *Lenin's Tomb* blog (from the UK).

'Untangling the Knots'

'Untangling the Knots' was one of the most thought-provoking articles in the journal. It argued that liberal ideology has become naturalised within Australian activism, and contends that revolutionaries should 'identify and expel' this. The article is at its strongest where it identifies specific ways in which this liberalism is the activist norm - such as through the 'stage-managing of protests' and 'pathologising militancy'. Again, in the Australian context where the radical left is extremely weak, it is surely useful to experiment with different tactics, rather than traditional approaches

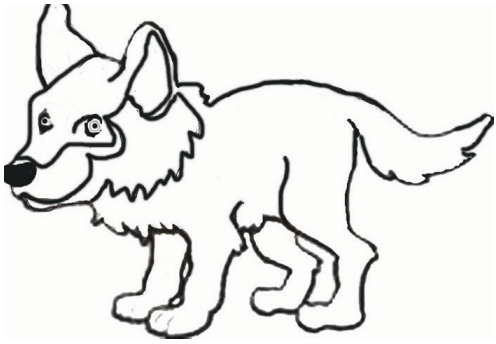
(the unending cycle of forums, rallies, speak-outs and stalls) being the only way to organise.

Of course, similar cycles occur within the anarchist/ultra-left milieu too. Instead of forums and rallies, we run bookshops, social centres and put out zines, with maybe an occasional direct action or a conference to spice things up. Even if these things are explicitly called 'revolutionary', this cycle can be just as boring as the left's rallies. The article in *Wolves* about anarchist spaces identifies some problems that can be encountered by uncritically repeating certain forms of activity, but this is not really touched on in 'Untangling the Knots' (perhaps for lack of space).

A more significant concern for us is that 'Untangling the Knots' doesn't really analyse the connection between liberal ideology and 'material conditions'. Liberal ideology isn't just created by people reading certain theorists, from politicians, unions hacks or NGO bureaucrats arguing liberal things, or from boring rallies. While these factors serve to reinforce and exacerbate liberalism, we'd argue that, overall, liberalism is produced by a much wider and more pervasive range of social experiences.

Unfortunately, we only have space to offer a brief summary of some of these experiences. But we'd argue that some of them include: 1) The fact that we actually do have certain freedoms within contemporary capitalism, such as to demonstrate, to talk about radical politics, to put out anarchist zines or sell left-wing newspapers. This lends credence to liberal ideas about 'rights' 2.) The fact that the political realm of government etc may appear to be more democratic than the economic realm of the market, and that state-run services have provided needed services to people who otherwise couldn't afford them, helping to support the idea that the state is a relatively neutral body that one should appeal to as a tool for reform 3.) The fostering of individualism in modern society, such as through discourses like 'if you work hard, you can succeed', leading more naturally to liberalism than a radical politics emphasising collective action.

Why does this matter? It matters because if we accept our conception, that liberal ideology is formed out of particular material conditions that we all experience (to varying degrees), it means that all contemporary movements, including ones that call themselves radical or anarchist, necessarily contain liberal elements. This is as everyone constantly experiences these conditions - including radicals. Although we should try and argue against manifestations of liberalism when they appear, accepting that things are going to be flawed and contradictory means that we can actually participate in movements, rather than constantly being on the outside. It might also help us



recognise and critique liberal tendencies within our own ultra-left/anarchist milieus. We can't romanticise disaffected parts of the population as being immune to the hold of liberal ideology, though they are perhaps less affected by it. For instance, a 16 year old non-white teenager living in the Western suburbs may be less invested in /affected by liberal discourse than a professional greens-voting middle aged person from Marrickville. We would be interested in disscussing what forms of organising might enable us to work with a wider variety of people, perhaps stepping further away from reformist action and rhetoric, and hopefully being more effective in radically changing society. However, while it is possible to reduce liberalism's power, the article's stated goal of 'identifying and expelling liberal ideology from revolutionary practice' is ultimately a futile one, as long as capitalism persists.

Some final thoughts

The remaining articles in *Wolves* all deserve plenty of analysis, but our own word limits are restricting us! Hopefully others can take up this challenge. So far *Wolves* has received much more online feedback and 'reads' (if the zinelibrary.net 'reads' counter can be presumed to be anywhere near accurate) than real-life feedback from people in the Sydney scene. No doubt this has been disappointing for the editor and the authors of articles.

When publications are produced, it is easy to feel like 'if people find them useful they'll read them/ write for them, if they don't they won't'. But maybe there needs to be more effort put in to building a stronger culture of reading, producing and reflecting on local, original writing. One way of creating this culture could be through reading and discussion groups. Activists have organised discussion groups on bell hooks and other famous lefties, and have spent years reading *Capital.* While these groups are worthwhile, perhaps they could better link up with local attempts at radical publishing.

In addition to needing a strong culture of reading and writing, publications like *Wolves* need networks of people who can distribute them, in person and online. They need people other than the editing collective to put on fundraisers for printing costs, give them out to their friends, start conversations about them, and give feedback. They need other publications to review and engage with them! In one of the articles in *Wolves*, 'Bulldawg' argues that left-wing conferences are not only the responsibility of the organisers, but can be seen as:

> a site of collaborative production, we each bring to it the stuff we have done and the stuff we know, but, like any other social relation, it is more than the sum of its parts.

The same is true for our publications.

Upcoming Events:

Sunday Sept 4 **Snapdragon Zine Fair & the launch of Mutiny Zine #61**
– Red Rattler, 6 Faversham St Marrickville 11am – 4pm

Wednesday Sept 7 **the People's Kitchen donation dinner [vegan & g free]**
– 22 Enmore Rd, 4pm food prep, 7pm service

Thursday Sept 8 **Public Rally: Protest against Barry O'Farrells IR changes**
– NSW Parliament House (on Macquarie Street), 12 Noon

Thursday Sept 8 **Villawood: Survival+Resistance Opening Night**
Artworks, film, talks, hip hop, music, poetry, performance art about the Villawood Detention Centre and what it means for Western Sydney
– ICE: Information & Cultural Exchange, 8 Victoria Rd Parramatta, 5.30pm

Friday Sept 9 Forum: **Malalai Joya, Afghanistan 10 Years On**
– Marrickville Town Hall, 303 Marickville Rd, 5.30pm

Saturday Sept 10 **Letter Writing to Prisoners**
– Black Rose Library, 22 Enmore Rd, Newtown, 5pm

Sunday Sept 11 **Dinner & Film: The Battle of Chile**
– Black Rose Library, 22 Enmore Rd, Newtown, 5.30 Dinner, 6.30 Film

Wednesday Sept 14 **the People's Kitchen donation dinner [vegan & g free]**
– 22 Enmore Rd, 4pm food prep, 7pm service

Friday Sept 16 **Gig: Only Sleeping, with Let Me Down Jungleman, Handsome, FGWMWS and Fixtures**
– Jura Books, 440 Parramatta Rd Petersham, 7pm

Saturday Sept 17 **Film: Manufacturing Consent**
– Jura Books, 440 Parramatta Rd, Petersham, 3pm – 7pm

Sunday Sept 18 **Public Rally: Stop Gas Drilling in Sydney**
– Camperdown Memorial Park (Cnr Lennox and Eliza St Newtown), 11am

Wednesday Sept 21 **the People's Kitchen donation dinner [vegan & g free]**
– 22 Enmore Rd, 4pm food prep, 7pm service

Friday Sept 23 **Gig: Crouching 80s Hidden Acronym with Rara Avis**
– Jura Books, 440 Paramatta Rd, Petersham, 7pm

Sunday Sept 25 **Dinner & Film: Murundak Songs of Freedom**
– Black Rose Library, 22 Enmore Rd, Newtown, 5.30 Dinner, 6.30 Film

Tuesday Sept 27 **Jura & Mutiny Zine Workshop: Radical Publications**
– Australian Museum, 6 College St, Sydney, 5:30pm $15

Villawood: Survival+Resistance. Majid Rabet, 'Brush', plastic cutlery, aluminium foil and cat hair